

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-12 are pending in the present application, Claims 1, 11, and 12 having been amended, and Claim 13 having been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Support for the amendments to Claims 1, 11, and 12 is found, for example, in Fig. 5A of the present application. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 12 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph; Claims 1-4 and 11-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Webler et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,013,030, hereinafter Webler); and Claims 5-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Webler in view of Kubota et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,255,669, hereinafter Kubota).

With respect to the rejection of Claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, Claim 12 is amended to more clearly describe and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded by Applicants as the invention. The method of Claim 12 recites “generating the ultrasonic image,” and the preamble is amended to be consistent with this added step.

Accordingly, this ground for rejection is believed to have been overcome. If, however, the Examiner disagrees, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned who will be happy to work with the Examiner in a joint effort to derive mutually satisfactory claim language.

With respect to the rejection of Claim 1 as anticipated by Webler, Applicants respectfully submit that the amendment to Claim 1 overcomes this ground of rejection. Amended Claim 1 recites

An ultrasonic probe for insertion into an endocavity of specimen in order to examine the specimen, comprising:

a holding portion including a first housing portion;

an insertion member configured to move along the first housing portion, the insertion member having at least one end for insertion into the endocavity of the specimen; and

an ultrasonic generator provided at the one end of the insertion member and configured to transmit an ultrasound pulse to the specimen and collect an echo signal resulting from the transmitted ultrasound pulse,

wherein the holding portion is coupled to the ultrasonic generator so that a position of the ultrasonic generator is adjustable in accordance with an angle of the holding portion.

Webler does not disclose or suggest every element of amended Claim 1.

Webler describes a probe that is inserted into a blood vessel. Webler does not disclose or suggest an ultrasonic probe for insertion into an endocavity of a specimen.

Furthermore, Claim 1 includes a holding portion that is coupled to the ultrasonic generator so that a position of the ultrasonic generator is adjustable in accordance with an angle of the holding portion. Webler does not disclose or suggest this element of amended Claim 1. On the contrary, Webler mere states "...drive unit 26 thus forms a handle which allows the physician to manually manipulate the relative position between the housing 22 and the position lever 24 thereby responsively permitting manual longitudinal movements to be imparted to the probe element 16."¹ There is no disclosure or suggestion that a position of the ultrasonic generator is adjustable in accordance with an angle of the holding portion.

In view of the above-noted distinctions, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 1 (and Claims 2-10 dependent thereon) patentably distinguish over Webler. Claims 11 and 12 recite elements analogous to those of Claim 1. Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 11 and 12 patentably distinguish over Webler for at least the reasons stated for Claim 1.

Addressing each of the further rejections, each of the further rejections is also traversed by the present response as no teachings in any of the further cited references to

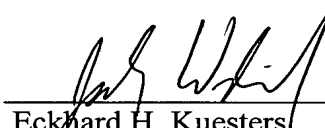
¹ Webler, col. 6, lines 22-26.

Kubota can overcome the above-noted deficiencies of Webler. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that those rejections be withdrawn for similar reasons as discussed above.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Eckhard H. Kuesters
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 28,870

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 06/04)

Joseph Wrkich
Registration No. 53,796